

THE AMERICAN ROLE

activity of the Irano-American Society of Cultural Relations was intensified. Closer contact was established with the press, and a visit by a group of Iranian editors to the United States was organized. Even then the American information services operated on a very small budget and represented a meager effort as compared to the programs of the British and Soviet embassies. Although this new effort could not be regarded as a deliberate countermeasure against Soviet propaganda, yet there was enough positive pro-American substance in it to call it a success.

THE DILEMMA OF BASIC AMERICAN POLICY

The problem of American propaganda was only a part of the general issue of United States' policy toward Iran. Did the American government possess any definite long-range policy for this part of the world during the war? Available evidence seems to give a negative answer. Of course one could always say that the American attitude toward Iran was dictated by noble principles such as respect for integrity and sovereignty, nonintervention in internal affairs, readiness to extend economic assistance and advice, and the Open Door doctrine. But these principles did not mean that a definite, purposeful policy had been formulated. The role the United States played during the second World War thrust it into the limelight of global politics. But the United States was none too quick to comprehend this fact and to assume the attendant responsibilities. Iran was politically an important area. This was the territory of traditional Anglo-Russian rivalry. It was the road to India and the area rich in oil. It was also the only country where great numbers of Soviet, British, and American troops were stationed

together. It was here that the Soviet Union experimented with its revolutionary colonial doctrines while at the same time it maintained its alliance with that great colonial Power, Britain. It was in Iran that American advisers were attacked as agents of imperialism, while Russia was receiving unrestricted lend-lease aid from the United States. These things could not pass unnoticed and were obviously known to the American government. They demanded certain basic decisions, the

⁰ These editors were Abbas Massudi (*Elteia'at*), Majid Movaqqar (*'Meh-r-i-Iran*), Mesbah-zadeh (*Kaykan*), and Abol-Qasim Amini (*Omid*).